

Thomas Prince 1706



88
**A Thanksgiving
SERMON
BEFORE THE
HOUSE of COMMONS**



*From Mrs. Longg -
St. Asaph
24/2/69*

Veneris 1^{mo}. die Februarii, 1688.

Resolved, *Nemo contradicente.*

That the Thanks of this House be given to the Reverend Dr. GILBERT BURNET, for the Sermon yesterday Preached by Him before this House; And that He be desired to Print his Sermon. And Mr. Dalben is to acquaint him with such the Thanks and Desire of this House.

Paul Goddell, Cl. Dom. Com.

S E R M O N

Preached before the
House of Commons,

On the 31st of *January* 1688.

Being the

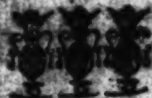
Thanksgiving-day

For the Deliverance of this Kingdom from
Popery and Arbitrary Power,

By His Highness the

Prince of Oranges Means.

By GILBERT BURNET, D.D.
and Chaplain to His HIGHNESS.



*Boston in New-England, Printed by S. Green, and Sold by
Samuel Phillips at the west end of the Town-House. 1689.*

S. B. R. M. O. N.

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OF F. L. GAY

NOV. 2, 1916

1888

The Nightingale

and the Nightingale

and the Nightingale

and the Nightingale

and the Nightingale

and the Nightingale

and the Nightingale

and the Nightingale

SERMON

Preached before the

HOUSE of COMMONS.

PSAL. CXLIV. *Verse xv.*

*Happy is that People that is in such a case: yea happy is that
People whose God is the Lord.*

THERE is no Instinct that is stronger and more Universal, than the desire of Happiness: there is a Charm in the sound of the word, which overcomes every one as soon as it is heard. If some Noble Minds have a largeness of Soul which carries them beyond all narrow and partial Regards, yet these do most passionately desire to see the happiness of their Countrey. And it must be confessed, that to see ones Countrey happy, and to feel ones self happy, are provocations to joy, which few men can possibly resist. But there are perhaps very few that have the Notion of Happiness which the Psalmist here sets forth: for, having considered all those Blessings which are apt to make the greatest

A Thanksgivng Sermon

greatest Impressions on humane Nature, such as goodly Sons and beautiful Daughters, and herds of all sorts, fruitful Flocks of Sheep, and Cattle fit to cultivate the Ground; and the enjoying all this so securely, that no Enemy from without should break in upon them, and that no disorder within should drive any away, or give so much as occasion to discontent or complaining in any part of their Countrey or Fields, headed their Streets. Upon all these considerations, that the People was indeed happy that was in such a case; but that, after all this Catalogue of Blessings summed up and set together, there was a Happiness that far exceeded it. It is true, this Opposition is set forth with more Beauty by the Seventy Translators in these words: *A People that as in such a case has been esteemed or called happy; but happy is the People whose God is the Lord*; as if all other happiness was only imaginary, this being the only real one. And it is certain, that if we can find a Nation that has both these, we must esteem it happy, without diminution or comparison. But if, laying the whole matter together, it appears that We are the Nation to whom both the Branches of this Blessedness belongs, and that we are, or at least, if we are not much in fault our selves, that we may be the just envy of the whole World, then we must conclude this Action with all possible Joy, when we find our selves under so happy an Influence. We feel our selves already delivered from great Miseries that we had not only in Prospect, but that had actually seized us. Our minds give us also the happy Auguries of a blessed Settlement: that our Religion shall shine all the World over, and that our Nation shall give law to it. Who can look on this great Assembly, in which we see a true Representative of *England*, brought together, and that without those Arts and Practices that had made the calling of a Parliament as formidable of late, as was desired upon all other occasions. Who I say, can look on all this without raising in himself all the just Expectations of every thing that is great or good? Or who can look back on those black Clouds that were hanging over our heads

beats, and then seemed charged with Storms and Thunders, and observe the present Calm, and consider the Steps of Providence, that have attended our Deliverance, without letting his heart run out into all the joyful expectations possible? you feel a great deal, and promise your selves a great deal more; and you are now in the right way to it, when you come with the Solemnities of Thanksgiving, to offer up your Acknowledgments to that Fountain of Life, to Whom you owe this new Lease which he has granted you of your own; this is the true way both to maintain that which you have already got, and to improve it to all those happy ends to which even your Wishes can carry you. Every man is full of the happy Change of our Affairs; but they are perhaps but few who offer up all in inward Adorations to him to whom all is due. We have added to our former *fasts* the shew of many dayes of Fasting, and of Rejoycing, and these how much sower they may affect the multitude, for whose sake may perhaps, that many are willing to shew an outward Compliance with such like Orders, while they inwardly dispise them; yet when they are observed with a contempt that is too gross to be called Hypocrisie, they can signifie nothing unless it be to leave us under the Condemnation of those who honour'd God with their Lips when their Hearts were far from him.

In the opening these Word I shall not look further back into the Particulars here enumerated, that make a People happy, than to the Words immediately preceeding my Text, *That there be no breaking in, nor going out, nor complaining in our Streets.* I shall shew you, First, What is signified by every one of them; and in the next place, I shall consider, how such like Blessings may belong to us; and thirdly, I shall shew you what that Superior and more valuable Happiness is, of having the Lord, the true Jehovah to be the God of a Nation; and in the last place, I shall consider what you ought to do for procuring both to your selves, and to the whole Nation, a share in this Happiness.

I. By *Isolation* is meant a more or less complete isolation of an Empire, or of any other political community, from the world round about it. The word in the African language only in general a *Wall*; and it is no strange or important notion, but that there is a firm Wall, and that it well sealed, that there is no disturbance given to the balance of Power. Several Translators have given it a very different sense. *That there be no Wall* is the proper sense. *Wall* and this may be either applied to the whole Nation, which being considered under the name of a *Walled City*, every hostile invasion is like a *Bomb* made in the *Wall* and *Bombardment* of the *Town*; or it may be meant more exactly of the *Walled Inclosure*, and *Property*, and the *Balance* of a Nation, that is set forth as the *Plan* accounts for it. That that is all in fact in general, and every one is to form in his own particular, that they need neither fear the *Balance* of the *World* nor the *Balance* of the *World*.

By *Isolation* is meant a more or less complete isolation of some of our own Land, which was the custom of the Eastern Conquerors and Emperors, who carried away the more considerable Men of one Country, and placed them in another, and thus in the way of *Isolation* brought about the *Isolation* of the *World*, and thus created a Misunderstanding between the Superior and the Inferior Orders of Men. The Policy appears still to be in the account that we have given of it, the *Isolation* of the *World* and the *Isolation* of the *World*.

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secret Murmurings of such as go about seeking Redress for the Injuries that are done them *Streets* is put for a Word of a larger signification in *Hebrew*, and signifies all open Places and Fields; and a Cry being opposed to Justice by the Prophet, *Isai. 5. 7. I looked for Righteousness, and behold a Cry*, these Words may be likewise applied to the Cries of the Oppressed, with which the Wise Man was so deeply affected, when he heard their Groans, and saw power on the side of their Oppressors; but that they had none to comfort them, thus he praised the dead more than the living, *Eccles. 4. 1. 2.* so that these words of *no complaining to be heard*, import, that there should be such an equal and steady Administration of Justice, that the poor should have no cause given them to go and spread their Complaints about the *Streets*. These words may be yet carried further, that as there should be no cause given to just Complaints, so the humour of murmuring, and of making unjust ones, should cease; and that as the Government should be just and equitable, so the People should have a suitable Sense of it. And thus summing up all this together, the happiness of a People, as it is here set forth, amounts to this:

That a Government is strong and vigorous with relation to its Enemies abroad, and just and equitable in its Administration at home, and that the whole Society and every Member of it is safe; that none are either driven out of their Country, or tempted to leave it, and that there is a general Serenity in all mens Tempers, as well as an Equity in the Government, no Complaints, Murmurings, nor Censures being to be heard in the ordinary places of concourse.

I need not add to the Representation of the Happiness of a Nation, anything in commendation of it, this were an unnecessary imposition on your Patience. A man that would employ his Rhetorick to praise himself, or to speak well of the State, would be very unwillingly heard, and indeed if one were on the wth side of the River, and on a hard and dry ground, Government, he ought to stay even all the Common Places.

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With all the Stores of Invention, and the liveliest Figures with which his Fancy could furnish him, to make so odious a thing look but tolerably; and by sacrificing Truth to Interest, and varnishing it over with Wit and Eloquence, he might shew how gracefully he could plead a very ill cause: but to commend that which I have set forth, is needless, where the sense of every man goes even before the reflections that arise either from his own Observations, or those that others may set before him, and determines him to conclude, that such a state is a great Felicity, because he feels it to be so. And indeed to see the Miseries of those Nations that have the advantages of Sun and Soil beyond others, which yet are happy under a feeble Sun and fruitless Soil, is an Argument beyond all that Fancy or Eloquence can invent. In short, Liberty and Justice are so naturally desired by all Men, and the happiness of them is so sensibly felt, that any further Discourse for setting them off, is a little needless, or indeed as little tolerable, as it is to set forth the Advantages that a man who sees and hears, has of those who are deaf and blind. So you see what is meant by a *People that is in such a case*: And I am sure you all feel somewhat within you, even the voice of Nature, telling you how *happy the People is that is in such a case*.

2. Suffer me then to go over these Particulars, that in them we may have a full Prospect of all that we ought to propose to our selves, in order to our temporal Happiness: The first is,

The *feeling us against all Breaching us*; which in the first sense of the words, is foreign Invasion; and of this we had very lately just Remembrance of two different sorts: The one was our being again brought under that foreign Yoke, out of which we had so happily escaped in the last Age, and which was ready to be laid upon our Necks in this. A Yoke is, as God knows, that leaves nothing free; all other Tyranny reaches but to more Partial and Exacted, but their dominion must be extended here; Reason itself must be stifled, and all must be subject

upon

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upon Trust: nor are mens Reasons and Consciences enough for this devouring Power: but their Wealth, their Persons, and their temporal, as well as their spiritual concerns, must be sctched within this Bondage: And with this difference, that all men are sure that they give them their temporal and perishing wealth, but none are made sure whether they receive in exchange that which is called the Spiritual and Incorruptible Treasure: we are sure that the saying of Masses brings in a great Treasure to the Church, but no man can pretend to be sure that his Friends Soul is delivered out of Purgatory by them: And the Shrines and Churches of the Saints are certainly enriched out of measure, but none of their Benefactors is sure that they interceed for them; so that upon very fallible and doubtful assurances, a vast Wealth is certainly brought into their hand; and Imprisonments, Cruelties of all sorts, and Death it self in its most terrible shape, must be the fate of any that but dares to think of shaking it off. As this is a Yoke, so it is foreign to us; we owe no dependance to the See that pretends to be Mother Church; we received not the Gospel from any sent by them: The Christian Religion was in this Island for several Ages before we had any Commerce with that See; nor were we ever subject to it any other way, than as a Prisoner is in the power of him that took him; we have all the just Titles to an entire Exemption from any acknowledgment of them; for even in the time that we were a Province to the *Roman Empire*, tho the See of *Rome* had all its Authority from the Dignity of the City, and that this could go no further than the Empire; yet even then we were not put under them, much less can it be pretended that the Empire being now dissolved, and at an end, we owe any Homage, there any more: And tho we did run the common Fate of the rest of *Europe*, of falling under the prevailing Superstition of some dark Ages; yet this Nation did even during the darkness, maintain its liberty the best it could: it had not force enough for a great while to get the better in the Dispute; but is felt the rigour of that Bondage.

so heavily, that it broke through it at last, and being once made free, it was a strange Presumption to imagine, that a Nation which has ever retained such a generous Sense of Liberty, could return to so severe and so ignominious a Servitude; and yet our Enemies hoped even to have gained this point: We saw the Negotiation set on foot with a high hand, solemn Embassies were sent of both sides, and the worst body of all those who support that usurped Authority, were to be our Task-Masters, Whether they acted wisely in this Matter, or not, I shal not determine; but it is certain, they acted very fairly, by letting us see our Danger so seasonably, that we had a timely warning given us, intimating to us how we were to be treated. But tho' this Yolk was bad enough, God knows, this was not all the Misery that was before our eyes; we were charmed by the Arts of a powerful but cruel Neighbour; and they had already broke in so entirely upon the Counsels here, that they had nothing to wish for with relation to the Nation; but to have the People as much under them, as the Publick Authority was at their disposal: We were trembling at the Apprehensions they put us in sometimes, of their having one of the Keys of *England*, and one of the most important Posts of the Nation, put into their Hands: which fell indeed afterwards into other hands, that proved less cruel, because less strong: But yet in that there was a particular Character of Reproach to the Nation, when a People conquered by it were become the Masters of the chief Posts in it. But when one Alarm went over, another succeeded: for from an Alliance which they themselves had publicly owned, we had reason to apprehend every thing that was dismal: A Government which had broke Faith both at home and abroad, that persecuted with Characters of Cruelty beyond all that former Ages had ever dreamt of, and that made War with Inhumane Fury: that broke, I say, both Edicts and Treaties with so high a hand, as if they had intended to affront all that was sacred among men; that had managed their Persecution with so much barbarous Rage, as if they had intended to

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Let the World see that the Inquisitors had yet Bowels left of which they had quite despoiled themselves; and that in their Wars have acted that in whole Provinces, which would have passed for a blot before, if done but in a single Town that had been taken by Storm. Such a Government, I say, as this is, being in so close a Conjunction with our own, gave us the blackest Apprehensions possible. This was the *breaking in* that threatened us: But tho' we are no more in danger to have our Gates set open to such an Enemy, by those who ought to keep them, yet we ought still to guard against them. They hate us, because we dare to be Freemen and Protestants. They have skill and cunning enough to wait for every opportunity, and to improve it: This is a *breaking in* that is to be dreaded, as we do the Inundations of the Sea, or the Eruptions of a devouring Fire.

It is an Union in your Councils, and a vigour in your proceedings that next to the Blessing of God, must secure us against the Breaches that may be made upon us by those two Enemies, who according to the Character given in the Psalm, are strange Children, whose mouth we know speaks vanity or deceit, and whose right hand we are sure is a right hand of falshood; and who, how much soever they may have differed of late, will be probably brought to unite in order to their first dividing, and then their destroying us. Excessive Severities upon the account of Religion will be as needless in themselves, as they may prove hurtful to the main design, and Dishonourable both to our Religion and our Nation: For as the one condemns Cruelty, so we know the other cannot endure the sight of it. Let us leave upon that Church the Infamy of Persecution, and not bring on our selves any share in the Reproaches that we so justly throw on them for so odious a thing.

Nothing makes a Bank so strong against the breaking in of Waters, as the consolidating it well together; if there is an universal Concurrence in the Civil Settlement, and afterwards an Union in Matters of Religion, we may hope that our Bank shall neither be broke thorow, nor yet underrivined. Here suffer me to tell you that

in the beginning of Queen Elizabeths Reign our Adversaries saw no hopes of retrieving their Affairs, which had been spoiled by Queen Marys Persecution; but by setting on foot Dissensions among Protestants upon very inconsiderable Matters. I myself have seen the Letters of the chief Bishops of that time, from which it appears that the Queens stiffness in maintaining some Ceremonies, flowed not from their Conscience, but from the Practices of some disguised Papists: And I have had in my hands the Original Journal of the Lower House of Convocation in the 5th Year of that Glorious Reign, in which the matter of the Ceremonies was first argued, and when it came to the Vote, it was carried by the greater number of the Voices of the Members that were present, to lay down all those Subjells of Contests: but the Protest returned it to the several side. And as these fatal Disputes have ever since in a great measure screened that Party, so they have weakened us and exposed us to all the Dangers out of which we have now escaped, yet so as by Fire.

But the second fence of breaking in, is never to be forgotten by you, I mean the breaking through a Mans Inclosure; or, in a word, the violating these two sacred Things, Liberty and Property, and the constitution of this August Body, which is the great Fence to both: When the only use that was made of Laws, was to find a colour to break them; when Justice was only pretended to support the highest Injustices; when no Mans Fence was strong enough to resist precarious Judges, & suborned Juries; when adhering to Law & Religion was become a Crime, and when prerogative which is only a power to preserve the People on extraordinary occasions, was made the great Engine to destroy them: in a word, when no man was safe in his innocence, nor secure in his Property; and when the owning the concerns of the Nation in this great Body, was accounted a Crime to be expiated by the best Blood that was in it; when I say, all these things were done, then was our fence not only broken down, but as if it were not enough to pluck up

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up Park-pales, without knocking down the Owners with them; so Laws, Justice and Trials were become the Words of Form to be made use of for destroying us by Rule and Method, and were only the Solemnities and Ceremonies of our Ruin.

The securing us then against such a breaking in, is the explaining and determining that which lay formerly too loose in General Terms; the shutting of all those back-doors, by which corrupt men had found a way to escape from the true meaning of the Law; the providing real Securities against the Returns of the like Dangers for the future, and the giving Remedies to that which is repairable for what is past: all this is incumbent on you, that so hereafter there may be no breaking in upon us. This will be so much the more easy for you to do, because you have not now a misled Authority, or a corrupted Party amongst you to struggle against the Methods which may be suggested. For now those who are the truest Patriots and the best Friends to their Religion in their Country, must reckon to be the most acceptable to the Glorious Instrument of our Deliverance, who carries in his heart the Words that he ordered to be put in his Standard. The Protestant Religion, and the Liberties of England: And who will be the forwardest in every Proposition that may secure and establish them both. To say all in a Word, You see where, and how we have been broke in upon, and this will best direct you to secure us for the future, that so hereafter there may be no more breaking in.

Not going on, this being the Consequence of the other, it will not be necessary to dwell long upon it. No stray Sheep will run out of the Fold if you secure them from the Wolf; Apostates and Defectors will be no more known among us, if you shelter us from the Beasts of Prey that would devour us. To be led into Captivity and become Slaves, is the last that we can look for, when we fall into their hands, who have no pity, or at least dare not show it, if any had it. Of this the World has seen an Instance in France, beyond all that former Ages ever knew, for it was an unheard of thing to see a Million or

arm of Ruin fallen upon, and which made miserable, he forced to render themselves inhuman by doing that for which their own Conscience must every day reproach them. Multitudes thrown into Prisons and Dungeons, condemned to the Gallies, and by a Fury scarce known among Barbarians, the very Bodies of the Dead were made Subjects on whom they exercised their Rage. Common Crises is gladdened with the death of an Enemy, but must be shocked by the Principles of an inhumane Religion; that can commit Outrages on the Carcasses of the dead.

* All this was acted with so high a hand that men of Quality and Learning, that had been eminent in the former parts of their Lives for Virtue and Gentleness, learn'd to put on all the fierceness of Inquisitors, and to divest themselves of all those tendernesses which hang long even about the worst of men. Insulting and Reproach was become the language of the Clergy, and there was so little Dissimulation in the case, on the part of good Nature, that the barbarous Usage of our unhappy Brethren was heightened by the Circumstances and manner of it. This was the going out, or the Captivity, that was to be expected by us after such a breaking in as has lately threatened us.

What could we expect, but that which was the Portion of some of our persecuted Brethren, that abandoning their Country, their Estates, and their Families, thought themselves but too happy if they could escape with their Lives in their Hands, and their Consciences undefiled. But if such a Dispersion had come upon us, whether could we hope to fly? The French Coast is great, and we could not be so narrowly watch'd, but that some passage or other was still to be found, whereas we were shut up in an Island. They had us to fly to, and likewise those blessed Provinces which have been the Sanctuaries of the Unhappy, and the Refuge of all that were persecuted for Religion's sake, but since they were a Free State, we could no longer go there. The English could not have suffered our Rains, for we had no other Refuge, when they were in a Prison, and had such a cruel Country, and

Delivered their Character a long and dangerous Navigation to the East or West-Indies was all the hope that seemed left us, and even there we could not think to be long safe from an insatiable Malice which pursues us at the greatest distance.

Another sort of *going out* that we were beginning to fall under, was the being tempted to forsake all those Engagements, that tie a Man to his Family, and to his Native Country, and to seek for that Ease by wandering abroad, which could not be allowed us, while we lived (tho ever so harmless) at home. And tho this is not so severe a Lot as to need much patience to bear it, yet it must be confessed that there is a Charm in ones Native Air, in Friends and Kindred, and the easiness of a settled Life, which Nature cannot throw off without feeling some Repugnancies to it. The settling all matters so among us, that our Country may have security from without, and Justice within, so that instead of tempting the Inhabitants to wander out of it, it may attract Strangers from all places to it; this, I say, will effectually keep us from *going out*; for an *English man* needs nothing to recommend his Country to him, but to be set a wandering for some years.

That *there be no complaining in our Streets*, no Alarms nor Cries; this will be best compassed by the giving our Enemies work abroad: by supporting the persecuted Protestants, and by forcing an Execution of the Edicts made in their Favours, and a Reparation of the crying Injustice that has been done them; and most particularly, by a perpetual and entire Conjunction with those *Provincers* that have in so Noble and indeed unparalleled a manner supported and assisted our *Great Deliverer*, in so vast an Undertaking. This Nation did them great Services in the last Age, when they were struggling for Liberty; but it was by lending Money, and sending them Troops, upon the security of cautionary Towns, though it was then the visible interest of *England* to preserve them. But they have now

in a way much more frank, more dangerous to themselves, as well as more obliging to us, without either Bargain or Security, put all to hazard, because we were ready to perish. It is not to be supposed that so generous a Nation in this is, can bring upon it self so foul a blot as ever to forget so vast a service. Their very name ought to be to us, to speak in a phrase of Scripture Poetry, as Ointment poured forth. We were their Neighbours, and Friends, and their Brethren before; but now upon this heightning of our Relation and Obligations to them, if we cannot find out terms of greater tenderness, yet at least we must study to feel somewhat, and ever to carry it in our hearts towards them, that cannot be expressed in words.

When we have thus secured our selves from Cries and Alarms, the next care must be to see Justice and Peace so to flourish at home, and Rewards to be so equally dispensed, with as little punishment as can possibly consist with publick safety, that there may be little occasion given to Complaint.

The exact conduct of Publick Justice; and the avoiding every Invasi^on upon the Freedom of Conscience, which is the first, and the most Sacred of all a Man's Rights, are the surest ways to prevent all just cause of Complaint: To speak the truth and to work righteousness; to relieve the Oppressed without respect of persons; to plead the cause of the Widow and the Fatherless, and be not ruling over the Consciences of any with force or cruelty, but the serving men within the limits of a just discretion, as to the manner of it, the entire freedom of serving God in the sincerity of their hearts, will put an end to many heavy and just Complaints, which have been poured out before God in the bitterness of many men's Spirits; whose lives have been made a burden to them, only because they could not all contrary to those persuasions, which they were not able in themselves to overcome.

But the removing the just causes of Complaint is not enough to take

take away all complaining from us, unless we can deliver our selves from an impatient and jealous temper, which forms complaints out of nothing, which creates imaginary Dangers, and suggests groundless Jealousies. This temper having once sowed our minds, will give us ill taste to every thing: every humour disagreeing to ours, or way of behaviour that we do not like, will be so swelled up to us by a disordered imagination, that we will be often in the state of those that were in great fear, where no fear was. We must put on a meek and gentle, a humble and good-natural temper, which thinks no evil, and believeth and hopeth all things.

3. And thus I have gone through the first half of my Text, *Happy is the People that is in such a case.* But to speak in Saint Paul's words, I go now to shew you a more excellent way. For how much soever all these Blessings may affect you, here is one of another sort, to which they all put together, cannot be compared; *Happy is the People whose God is the Lord.* When Idolatry had spread it self over the World, every Nation, City and Family, had its peculiar Object of Adoration; which was called its God, that was worshipped by it, and to which the people fled, and on which they depended in all their Distresses. This being the corruption under which mankind had fallen. When God inspired Moses to deliver to the Jews, a Religion by which he intended to wean them from Idolatry, in such a way as their Capacities and Inclinations could bear. He proposed himself to them, under that simple Idea, of being the *Yehovah*, that is, he who truly and necessarily is, that by the simplicity of this Notion, they might be kept in, and might not let their minds run out into gross imaginations, concerning him: for when Images of God are once formed in peoples minds, they will be easily led to represent him to their senses in some visible and gross Shape. But as God was presented in so simple and such an un bodied Idea to them, so he entered into a Covenant with that Nation, by which they on the one hand were engaged to worship him only, and to do it in a way suitable to his

Nature, and to those precepts which he had set before them : so he on his part promised to them Protection and acceptance. And this is the full meaning of those Words so often repeated in the Old Testament, *I am the Lord thy God*, which are sometimes a remembrance to the People of their Duty towards him; and at other times an assurance to them of that Protection which they might expect from God : so that the happiness of a People *whose God is the Lord*, amounts to these two things; the one is, that they serve and worship God sincerely, being delivered from the Corruptions and Defilements of Idolatry; and the other is that they come under the Special Care and Protection of God.

To make the true Jehovah our God, import;

First, That we adore and acknowledge him, and worship him in spirit and in truth, and that we free our minds from every thought, that leads to Idolatry, and our Worship from every Object that may tempt us to it.

The two extremes relating to Religion seem to be Atheism and Idolatry, and yet they come nearer one to another than can be imagined; for as the one worships no God, so the other makes that which is worshipped, to be no God. When we bring God down in our minds to somewhat that is like our selves, or only a very little better, the Impression that such a Religion can make on us will be but feeble, and it working only on our fears, may subdue us into a blind compliance to some contrivances that may prove of advantage to those who have invented them; but will never purify and exalt our natures which certainly is the true design of Religion.

In a word, Atheism denies God, and Idolatry degrades him. It depresses our Ideas of him, and debases all our Notions of Religion.

* The pomp and solemnity of it will perhaps affect the Vulgar; but they being satisfied with the expence and trouble that their Religion puts them to, grow upon that dissolute and immoral, severe and cruel, so that nothing defaces all the Impressions of Religion, nor destroys all the Seeds of Morality that are born with us, more than Idolatry. And as the Heathens departing from the Idea of the great God's being the sole Object of Worship, their mixing with him an Infinity of Inferiour Deities; and their representing the Divinity by some visible Objects to their Sense, was the Idolatry practised all the World over, and into which the Jews did frequently relapse, during the time that the Old Testament was written, in opposition to which the true Jehovah was the God of *Israel*: So another, not unlike this, in all its main Characters, was introduced among Christians. The notion of a single Mediator was as much pressed in the New Testament, as that of one God is in the Old; and the Worship was reduced to a plainness and simplicity far different from the Pomp that was allowed by *Moses*: and yet how many under-Mediators have been brought in to divert us from depending solely upon the only Mediator by whom we are taught to come to God? And how have the Christian Churches been defiled with so many visible Objects of Worship, and so gross a Pageantry, as if the Design had been to make the Idolatry of Christians appear to be a much more scandalous thing, than that of the Heathens ever was? But the freeing our Temples and even our Thoughts from Idolatry, is but one branch of that which is implied in this, That the Jehovah or *Lord is our God*: for this signifies that we not only do not worship him in a way unworthy of him; but that we do adore him in those instances that become this Relation of his being *our God*: and this we do when we seriously call upon him and pray to him, when we do entirely depend on him, and resign up our selves wholly to his conduct; when we do sincerely acknowledge, That all the blessings we receive, come from him; and when, in a word, we

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perform all those duties to him, which we owe to the Author of our Being, and the Giver of all the good that we enjoy. But if we laugh at all that is sacred, or set about the performances of it in so slight manner, as shew how little we believe that which we profess; if it is plain, that Prayers and Thanksgivings, Worship and Sacraments are only Words or Signs of form; and if the whole frame of our Lives, and the disposition of our Hearts shews that these things are only masks and disguises put on to deceive those that have some regard to them. Then it is plain, That the *Lord is not our God*. And if he is not *our God* in this first sense, we have no reason to expect that he should be *our God* long, in the second sense of these words; that is, That he will protect and defend us. *He is as a father and a shield, and will give both grace and glory*: but this blessedness comes only on those that *trust in him*. It is certain, That according to the Phrase in the *Psalms*, the *shield of the earth*, that is, The defence of the Land, belong unto God. And how unworthy soever those that have made him their God may have become of that relation, yet till their sins grow up to that height that he will throw them off, he will continue to watch over them, with so distinguishing a Providence, That all the World shall see that his eyes are upon those that fear him, and that hope in his mercy: he can and will when he thinks fit, *defeat the councils of the Wise, and make the Diviners mad*. *He taketh the crafty in the snare, which they themselves had laid*. And as we do all with joy feel and acknowledge this day, he can raise up deliverances for his people, even when they seemed to be as *sheep appointed for the slaughter*: he can raise up an Instrument, even the man whom he has made strong for himself; and so animate, direct and conduct him, that he, with a small Force in opposition to a great and powerful Army, should yet find no Enemy, but overturn a mighty Empire, and that with so little confusion and disorder, not to say so little blood and destruction, that instead of Scenes of horror, all was Welcome and Acclamation; and

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and this God has carried on so far, that we are now upon the point of seeing all end in an entire Settlement.

Thus tho' God knows We, I mean all ranks and conditions of Men, or to enumerate them in *Daniels* words, *our Kings, our Princes, and our Fathers, and all the people of the Land, had sinned, and done wickedly, and rebelled against him*; so that we had reason to have looked for some heavy Curse to be poured out upon us, and that because we had rejected the Lord from being our God, therefore he should have cast us off from being his people; yet he in the midst of all this wrath, that we had stirred up against our selves, has remembered mercy: And he has given us such a Pledge, and all the World such a Proof that he is our God; that if this doth not soften us first into Repentance, and then into acknowledgments, and to the performance of those Vows that we made to him in our Distresses, We may fear that we shall fall under that Curse of the Tree which continued Barren, after the last essay of cultivation was made upon it: *Cut it down, why should it cumber the Ground any longer?*

4. I come now in the last place to propose to you those things by which you can secure to your selves and the Nation this great blessing of the *Lord's being our God*; I doubt not but you have all the former part of my Text enough upon your minds.

1. It is indeed your Duty, and you ought to do it, but even in order to the securing our Temporal Happiness, you may all now see how necessary it is to take care that God be always on our side, for the best laid and most prospering designs are soon blasted, when they are cross'd by him:

2. You see such Revolutions, and such Disappointments in all
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humane Councils, and in the fairest probabilities, that I think this will make you for ever consider of what importance the blessing of God is to the success of every undertaking; and to lay this before you in instances that are fresh and speaking; you saw several Assemblies of Parliament, and from which the Nation did expect a happy Settlement, and yet all were disappointed: after that you saw another, from which you expected every thing that was fatal, and yet God made that the means of maintaining our Laws, and our Religion: You saw a mighty Army and a vast Revenue fortified by a formidable Ally; but you could never have hoped, that this Army which gave you so much Terror, should have had so great a share in the glory of your Deliverance, and no man could have thought, that the Councils of our Enemies should have done more for us, than all the Projects of our Friends could ever have done: you who saw the state of things three Months ago could never have thought that so total a Revolution could have been brought about so easily, as if it had been only the shifting of Scenes.

These are speaking Instances to let you see of what consequence it is to a Nation to have the Lord for its God. We have seen it hitherto in so eminent a manner, that we are forced to conclude, that we are under a special influence of Heaven, and since in God there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning; We must confess that if there comes any change in Gods Methods towards us, that it arises only out of our ingratitude and unworthiness. If we will go on in our Atheism and Immoralities, in our Contempt of God and Religion, and in all those Disorders that have cried so long for vengeance upon us; then we may justly apprehend that this short reviving, will be but an interval of a moments breathing, to try whether we are fit for a total Deliverance, or indeed capable of it or not; but that this being abused and lost by us, we must next fall under more dismal Calamities, even than those that we lately feared

before the Death of Corruption.

World, and that we shall be a blessing, and a reproach to all the Earth.

I shall not now enlarge upon those things, that every private person ought to do for diversing so terrible a desolation; but shall only Name those things, that all good men expect from your Councils.

The first is, To secure us for ever, as far as humane Wisdom and the force of Law can be it, from ever falling under the just apprehensions of the return of Idolatry any more amongst us; and this making the best provisions possible against those Dangers that lay on us so lately.

2. To beat down that Irreligious and Atheistical humour, that has gained so much ground among us, and that impudently scoffs at all that is sacred in Religion; you cannot indeed make Men become truly Religious, but you can make them be much afraid and ashamed of professing themselves Atheists.

3. You can in a great measure remove that Scandal that falls on all Religion, and on ours in particular, which is occasioned by the diversity, not so much of Opinions, for God be thanked there is not much of that, as of Rites, and matters indifferent, that so we may be brought to glorify the Lord our God with one heart and with one mind.

4. You can make provisions for the support of so great a part of our Clergy, who being destitute of the necessary means of subsistence, are either qualified for a profane employment, nor any way able to render themselves more capable for maintaining even the doctrine of Divine Worship, much less for the discharge of so high a Trust; as is the care of Souls.

5. You are concerned to give the last finishing to our Reformation, by the removal of the Old Corruptions, and yet retain among us in penitence

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and the Administration of the Ecclesiastical Authority is liable to
great Objections. I will not run out into farther Particulars, for as
will hereafter to find them; and if you once see about it, you will soon
see what work there is before you.

6. And in the last place, You ought to put such Marks of your
knowledge for this great Deliverance, both with relation to that
God who has wrought it, and to the happy Instrument by which he
has wrought it, that there may be a frequent return of the full dis-
charges of our gratitude.

Now our fifth of November is to be enriched by a second
Service, since God has enabled it so far, as to be the beginning
of that which we may justly hope shall be our compleat De-
liverance from all Plots and Conspiracies; and that this second
Blessing which has fallen on that day shall darken, if not quite
wear out the former. Let our Souls, and all that is within us,
rejoice in that God, who has saved us from the Lion's mouth, and
has heard us from the Horns of the Unicorn. Let us in the words
in which the Psalm begins, Bless the Lord who is our Strength,
our Fortress, and our Deliverer; what are we that he has thus
thought on us, and sent his hand from above, and delivered us
from the hand of strange Children; whose mouth speaketh Va-
nity, and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood? Let us
for all this sing a new Song to God; even sing praises to him,
who has hitherto Delivered One, that we hope shall be to us
a Deliverer from the hurtful Sword.

Let us meditate a while on this great Salvation that he has
wrought for us, and let us carry it on to those glorious ends
of settling our Religion, and delivering our Nation, not only
from all Oppression and Injustice at present, but from the dan-
ger of falling under it for the future.

And then let us celebrate with the highest Acknowledg-
ments, and the justest and gratefullest Returns possible, Him
through whose means we enjoy our quiet, and you the liberty

before the House of Commons.

of this free and August Assembly. Neither the Vainness, nor the dangers of the undertaking could shake a mind that is a boy's fear, and yet beyond the restless Ambition that pushes on an unquiet Spirit. He has saved the Nation, but leaves it now the entire liberty of securing it self; and you know best how this is so to be performed, that there be no *breaking in, nor going out, nor complaining in our Streets*; for *happy is the People that is in such a case, yea, and happy is the People whose God is the Lord.*

FINIS.
